

By the United States in Congress assembled. March 31, 1785

BY THE UNITED STATES IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED. MARCH 31, 1785. AN ORDINANCE FOR THE REGULATION OF THE OFFICE OF THE *SECRETARY* OF CONGRESS.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE UNITED STATES IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, That the SECRETARY of CONGRESS shall in future be charged with the following duties, and shall keep his office in or near the statehouse or building where the sessions of Congress shall be holden.

He shall carefully preserve the journals of Congress, and all other papers committed to his charge; and such as are secret in their nature, or by special order, shall not be communicated by him to any person, except members of Congress, and such persons as may be entitled thereto by special resolutions.

He shall not deliver any original journal out of his office, nor shall he deliver any original letter or paper out of his office, without an order of Congress, and a receipt therefor.

He shall deliver attested copies of any resolutions of Congress, or public papers in his office, not secret in their nature, or by special order, to any members of Congress who may require the same.

He shall transmit to the secretary for foreign affairs, to the secretary for the war department, to the secretary of marine, to the commissioners of the board of treasury, and to the postmaster general, all papers referred to them by Congress respectively, as well as an authenticated copy of all acts, ordinances and resolutions of Congress touching their respective departments.

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He shall keep a daily account of all memorials, petitions and communications received by Congress, noting therein their object, and the steps taken respecting them; and lay the said account or register every day on the table in Congress, for the inspection of the members.

He shall return such answers where Congress shall direct to be given to the memorials, petitions and communications, except where Congress shall judge it proper, that the same be given by their president, or where it shall be the duty of any of the executive departments to return such answer.

He shall transmit to the several states, all acts, ordinances, resolutions and recommendations of Congress—correspond with the states, for the purpose of receiving communications from them, relative to the execution of the same, and make report thereof to Congress—keeping a book in which shall be entered copies of all such letters and communications.

He shall attend Congress during their session, and in their recess, the Committee of the States, either in person or by his deputy—read the public dispatches, acts, ordinances and reports of committees, and make the proper entries on the journals.

He shall authenticate all acts and proceedings of Congress not specially directed to be authenticated by their president—and keep a register of all treaties, conventions, ordinances and permanent acts of Congress.

He shall cause to be made and laid upon the table for every state represented in Congress, and for every member appearing for any state unrepresented, a copy of every ordinance, or report upon a matter of importance and not of a secret nature, for the consideration of which a day is assigned.

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He shall keep the great seal of the federal union, and cause the same to be affixed to every act, ordinance, or paper Congress shall direct. He shall superintend the printing of the journals and other publications ordered by Congress.

He shall keep a book in which shall be noted in columns, the names of the several members of Congress, the state which they represent, the date of their appointment, and the term for which they are appointed.

That as well the Secretary of Congress, as the deputy secretary and clerks, shall take and subscribe the oath or affirmation of fidelity and of office, prescribed in an ordinance passed on the 28th day of January, 1785—which oaths shall be taken by the said Secretary, before the president of Congress; and that all former resolutions for regulating the duties of the office of the Secretary of Congress, be, and they are hereby repealed. **DONE**, &c.

Ordinance for regulating the Office of the Secretary of Congress March 31, 1785